



Questionable Design, Construction Practices likely Contributed to Surfside Condo Collapse, Construction Dive, quoted Megan Yllanes, Oct. 1, 2021

Dive Brief:

- While it may take years to fully unwind what caused the collapse of Champlain Towers South in Surfside, Florida, it appears that there were multiple points of failure, including questionable construction practices, that could have contributed to the tragedy that killed 98 people in June, according to an analysis by The New York Times.
- There were several issues that occurred during construction that could have contributed to the building's collapse, including problems with the concrete coverage in the structural slab on the ground-level deck and with the amount of rebar in the columns in the parking garage, Gregg Schlesinger, a Fort Lauderdale attorney and former construction engineer and general contractor, told Construction Dive.
- In addition, engineers from the National Institute of Standards and Technology investigating the collapse are focusing on the materials used in construction and the foundation's design, among other variables.

As more comes to light about design and construction flaws at Champlain Towers South, liability questions will also be at the forefront. While many contractors may think their protection extends into the future, it is becoming apparent that the passage of time doesn't reduce liability. If a failure occurs, contractors can be a target years later.

For example, in New York, the statute of limitations on a construction defect is six years from the date of substantial completion, Megan Yllanes, a partner and co-chair of the general liability defense practice group at law firm Kaufman Dolowich & Voluck told Construction Dive. "But for personal injury, it's three years from when an injury occurs. So in theory, litigation could be brought many, many years later, including 40 years later."